



A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO THE 41<sup>st</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  
(Including Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Malibu, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, South Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills.)

FEBRUARY 2005 EDITION

## Governor Issues "Reform" Proposals

The Assembly has begun oversight hearings on the Governor's proposed 2005-06 budget, which was released in January. California's independent Legislative Analyst's Office has done their assessment and made comments. Now the full Assembly Budget Committee and five Assembly Subcommittees are hard at work on the Governor's proposals on how to balance a budget that will require over \$9 billion in cuts. Unlike the Federal government, California can't engage in deficit spending.

My highest priority is working toward a budget solution that is fair and honors the public trust, especially as to voter-approved initiatives like Prop. 98 (guarantees K-14 education funding) and Prop. 42 (dedicated transportation funding). The proposed and significant cuts to In-Home Supportive Services, that allow the elderly and disabled to stay in their homes, and cuts to MediCal recipients and health-related programs are also of great concern.

Somewhat perplexing are the four "reforms" that the Governor is pushing the Legislature to adopt, holding out the threat of going to the voters for a special election this November if the Legislature differs with him. It's important to note that NONE of these reforms will save money in this year's budget, in next year's budget, or, in most cases, ever. The Governor is engaged in big-ticket fundraising events both in California and out of state looking for contributors to finance his four initiatives.

The four proposals are part of an Extraordinary Session of the Legislature called by the Governor. Hearings will be held in various policy committees this month for deliberations and analysis.

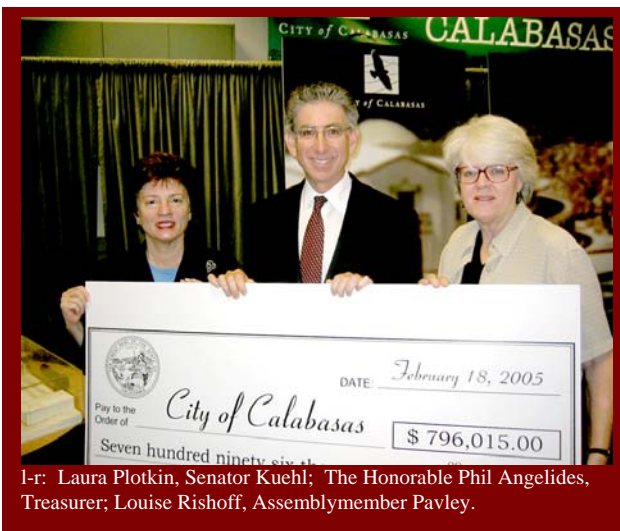
- Redraw legislative and congressional districts mid-census. Both Democrats and Republicans are expressing concern about this when the lines will have to be redrawn again following the 2010 census. There are many different systems in use or under consideration in other states as to how districts are drawn. I believe that such a decision should be made deliberately, and not by the "sound bites" that too often define initiatives.
- Institute some kind of merit pay for teachers. But how will districts identify, quantify, and standardize which teachers may be eligible for additional pay when the schools, students, and available resources vary wildly from rich districts to poor ones? Should it be based on test scores? Subjective evaluations by the school principals? Peer review? In my 28 years of teaching, I've never found a fair way to decide which teachers deserve more money than others.
- Putting new state employees into 401(k)-like pension systems. Beginning in 2007, all new state employees, including teachers, would be required to put a portion of their retirement pension into a 401(k) type of account. This proposal is similar to the President's plan for Social Security. One of the tradeoffs for many of us, especially with college degrees, is spending a significant number of years in

public service careers making middle-class salaries, but with the expectation of having a relatively stable pension on retirement. It has been reported that the average state worker who retires at the age of 60 after working for 20 years would receive roughly \$20,000 a year for their retirement. Relying on the uncertainties of Wall Street could create problems for future state workers when they reach their retirement age. It may also have the unintended consequence of discouraging the workforce of tomorrow from choosing careers in public service.

- Putting the budget on “autopilot,” meaning that if 2/3 of the Legislature cannot reach agreement on a budget in a very short period of time, cuts would be made across the board, with no consideration of priorities or impacts.

There could be in excess of 60 initiatives on a November special election ballot, based on what is being submitted to the Secretary of State’s office and is reported in the press.

The Legislature is also engaged in hearings on how President Bush’s proposed budget cuts will impact California’s budget and priorities. Just a few of those concerns include major cuts to the reimbursements owed to local government for the cost of incarceration of undocumented prisoners, and cuts to Medicare for the poor, elderly or disabled.



l-r: Laura Plotkin, Senator Kuehl; The Honorable Phil Angelides, Treasurer; Louise Rishoff, Assemblymember Pavley.

## Calabasas Receives First Library Grant Check

Congratulations to the City of Calabasas on their successful application for library construction funds from the State Library Bond Act. On Friday, February 18, State Treasurer Phil Angelides personally delivered the first installment payment to the city in the amount of \$796,000 at the city’s Library Kickoff event. I was very pleased to support Calabasas’ grant application before the State Library Bond Act board, and delighted when they qualified.

My District Director, Louise Rishoff, and Laura Plotkin, Senior Deputy for State Senator Kuehl, were both present.

## Assembly Committee Reviews Car Emissions Regs

On February 7, the Assembly Transportation Committee held an informational hearing to review the regulations approved last year by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) that will implement my bill, AB 1493, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks. Both the Legislature and the CARB have done an outstanding job in fulfilling the requirements of the bill. The approach California has taken is now being considered all over the United States and in Canada.

The Transportation Committee hearing included detailed testimony from the CARB on the regulations themselves. That testimony was followed by a number of public and private interest groups, including representatives of the business, labor, scientific, health, faith, and environmental communities. Auto manufacturers were specifically invited to testify but declined to participate, citing concerns about the lawsuit they have filed challenging California’s authority to regulate.

I regret that the auto companies – both foreign and domestic – have decided to fight these regulations in court because I think if they embraced the regulations they would find a ready market for environmentally beneficial vehicles. It’s quite surprising and somewhat disingenuous to have the foreign automakers, who are working with their own countries to meet Kyoto Protocol emission reduction targets, join U.S. companies in this lawsuit. The U.S., with 4% of the world’s population, contributes 25% of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. The rest of the world generally agrees that the U.S. needs to do our fair share.

## Website Link to Hybrids in HOV Lanes Information

Every week, I get inquiries from all over the state from people who either own or plan to purchase a hybrid vehicle. They want to know when my bill, AB 2628, which will allow single-occupant hybrid drivers to use the HOV (carpool lanes), will be implemented. Even though the bill has been signed into law here in California, Federal law does not allow single-occupant cars in HOV lanes, and therefore we are awaiting a needed Federal waiver. Legislation has already been introduced in Congress.

I have added a button on the home page of my Assembly website to link people to an update page, which will maintain the most current information on the status of action by Congress. Just go to [www.assembly.ca.gov/pavley](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/pavley).

## NOTE: Date Change on Upcoming Soka Meeting

One of the funding partners on the acquisition of Soka University is the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission. Right after my January newsletter went out, the meeting date and place changed where they will be voting on an allocation toward the purchase of Soka.

### **The new date and place of the SMBRC meeting is:**

**February 24, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** (meeting in Marina del Rey)  
Del Rey Yacht Club, 13900 Palawan Way, Marina Del Rey, CA 90202

If your schedule permits, please consider attending the meeting and thanking the Commissioners for helping to make this acquisition a reality. If you can't attend, please send your letter of support to the SMBRC, 320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles CA 90013

### **The final meetings to approve the purchase will be:**

**February 24, 2005 – Wildlife Conservation Board** (meeting in Sacramento)  
Support letters should go to Al Wright, Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board  
1807 13<sup>th</sup> Street, #103, Sacramento, CA 95814

**March 10, 2005 – Coastal Conservancy** (meeting in Oakland)  
Support letters should go to Sam Schuchat, Executive Director, Coastal Conservancy,  
1330 Broadway, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA 94612

**March 11, 2005 – State Public Works Board** (meeting in Sacramento)  
Support letters should go to Tom Campbell, Chair, Public Works Board  
915 "L" Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

***Related:*** On February 9, the Agoura Hills City Council voted unanimously to allocate \$100,000 in open space funds plus \$150,000 in city general funds toward the purchase of Soka. ***Thank you Agoura Hills!***

## Legislation on Affordable Rx Drugs Introduced

Millions of Californians are struggling to afford the skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs. In California, taxpayers spent almost \$3 billion for prescription drugs in the Medi-Cal program in 2002-03, a figure that rose to \$3.8 billion in 2003-04. Recent studies found that more than one-third of all Americans have trouble affording their prescription drugs.

I am pleased to be a co-author of four bills in this legislative session to help address this growing crisis:

**AB 73** – Provides information to consumers about international pharmacies that meet state standards for safety and accessibility, and that sell prescription drugs for 40% to 75% less.

**AB 75** – Establishes a state program offering a drug discount card for low-income Californians.

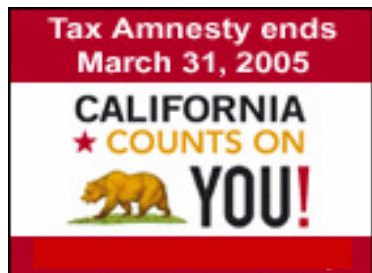
**AB 76** – Consolidates drug purchasing for state programs to negotiate for lower drug prices.

**AB 77** – Creates a pilot program for the California Department of Corrections to purchase prescription drugs at Federal discount prices, which is expected to save the state \$50 million each year.

## Consumers Union Website on Lower Cost Drugs

Consumers Union, publisher of Consumer Reports, has created a new service to help the public access information on cost-effective alternatives to brand name prescription drugs. The website, called *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs*, summarizes medical reports that assess how well a particular drug works and how safe it is. Each of the reports is prepared in consultation with medical experts and reviewed by consultants who have expertise in specific drug categories and who adhere to strict conflict-of-interest rules. The goal is to let you know which drugs cost less than their competitors, yet are equally effective. Check out their website at [www.crbestbuydrugs.org](http://www.crbestbuydrugs.org).

## State Offers Tax Amnesty Window of Opportunity



If, for any reason, you have not paid or have underpaid your income, franchise, sales, or use taxes, the FTB is providing a chance to pay those past-due taxes without penalties or fear of prosecution. Interest charges still apply. You will also avoid very substantial new penalties that go into effect March 31, 2005.

### Why is California doing this?

Income tax evasion alone accounts for losses to our state of \$6.5 billion annually, so there is a benefit to the state as well as to the delinquent taxpayer to have an amnesty period and get the taxes paid. Some people may not realize how serious tax evasion is. Penalties up to 50% on unpaid taxes, fines

up to \$20,000, interest charges compounded daily, and possible prison time are the costly consequences of tax evasion.

To get an amnesty application, log on to the California Taxes Website at [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov). **Amnesty runs from February 1 through March 31, 2005. All applicable tax returns must be filed and payment made by May 31, 2005.**

For general tax assistance, the FTB Office of the Taxpayer Advocate now has an 800 number for the public. Call toll-free to 1(800) 883-5910.

## Congratulations to New Chamber Directors

The first few months of the year can be busy times for our local chambers of commerce. It's when many of them gather to celebrate the previous year's accomplishments, recognize community members, and install a new board of directors. I had the pleasure of personally attending the Woodland Hills Chamber and Port Hueneme Chamber installations. My District Office staff attended others.

Port Hueneme Chamber of Commerce:

The Port Hueneme Chamber held their 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Installation and Awards Dinner on February 11. I presented a certificate of recognition from the State Assembly to Board Member Mark Bacin, director of the wonderful Maritime Museum in Channel Islands Harbor, for his service on the Board from 1997-2004. I joined the Chamber and Oxnard Harbor District in honoring their 2004 Citizen of the Year, Jeanette Morando; 2004 Business Persons of the Year AC1 Mark Govea and CE1 Alexander Semmler, and the 2004 Chairman's Award winner Diane Achatz. Chamber President Charlotte Gesling is beginning her second term of distinguished leadership.

Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce:

At their January 22 Gala, I had the privilege of officially discharging and thanking the outgoing Chamber officers for their dedicated service. I presented certificates of recognition to Stephen T. Holzer, outgoing 2004 Chairman of the Board, as well as to Mercy Alpert, Susan Harris, and Rose Goldwater. Kathleen Sterling was honored with the Chamber's 2004 Joseph Staller Memorial Award for Excellence in Service for her outstanding philanthropic leadership and her work with local charitable and non-profit organizations. I was also happy to welcome to Lois Curran-Klein, incoming Chamber President and her Board.

Thanks to all of our local chambers of commerce who devote so much time and effort to activities that benefit their business community and the wider community as a whole.



## Sepulveda Adobe

The public is invited to attend the annual "Anza en Calabazas" historical presentation and festivities on **Sunday, February 27, at 2:00 p.m.** Join in the commemoration of the Spanish Colonial era and the traditions of the Californios and Californianas, which were introduced to Calabazas by Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza on February 22, 1776. It will be held at the **Sepulveda Adobe in Malibu Creek State Park** – northwest corner of Mulholland Highway and Las Virgenes Road.

For more information, contact Robin Gensley Mitchell at (310) 327-5345 or (818) 222-4617, or e-mail Robin at [robin@scale-watcher.com](mailto:robin@scale-watcher.com).



Photo: City of Calabazas

## District Resident is "Commissioner of the Year"

Congratulations also to **Hal Helsley**, Los Angeles County Planning Commissioner and 41<sup>st</sup> AD resident, who was named "Commissioner of the Year" by the California County Planning Commissioners Association. Hal was appointed to the Commission by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, and is a longtime leader in the preservation of the Santa Monica Mountains. Among his many accomplishments are helping to strengthen County hillside and ridgeline protections as a Planning Commissioner. Hal was a great choice!

## Agoura Hills Library Volunteer Honored by County



Agoura Hills library volunteer extraordinaire, **Diane Haupt**, was just named by the Los Angeles County Library system as their "Volunteer of the Year." This won't come as much of a surprise to Agoura Hills library regulars. Diane has been the volunteer heart and soul of the library for over 20 years. For many years, she could be found toiling in the tiny and forlorn Bookmobile that was beached behind the aging Las Virgenes Library and which served as the Friends of the Library used bookstore. She can now be found in the charming and well-stocked Friends' *Book Cellar* located in a side room off the underground parking garage of the beautiful new Agoura Hills Library. Diane almost single-handedly created this wonderful place, filled with barely-used and even brand new books at bargain prices. The *Book Cellar* is open to the public every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Diane will be honored by the County in April at a luncheon for other County volunteers at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion at the Music Center. **Warmest congratulations, Diane!**

## \$50,000 in Scholarships Now Available To California Students

The Friends of the California State Fair Scholarship Foundation is accepting applications for their Scholarship Program for the 2005-2006 academic year. College students and graduating high school students currently attending California institutions are eligible and must apply by March 25, 2005. For more information please contact Wendy Ross at 916-274-5969 or [wross@calexpo.com](mailto:wross@calexpo.com).



## BUDGET HEARING ON AIR/WATER QUALITY

Friday, March 4, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. – Del Rey Yacht Club, Marina del Rey

CalEPA and Resources Budget Hearing

**“Funding and Needs to Clean Up Our Air, Water, and Protect our Coasts”**

Co-Hosted by

**Senator Sheila James Kuehl, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #2**

**Assemblymember Fran Pavley, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3**

The Legislative budget subcommittees that oversee environmental and resource issues for the State of California will be holding a special oversight hearing to gather information on two of Southern California's most pressing environmental concerns – coast and ocean protection, and air quality.

Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3, Chaired by Assembly Member Fran Pavley, and Senate Subcommittee 2, Chaired by State Senator Sheila Kuehl, will be hearing from Los Angeles-area researchers, advocates, and citizens on both the progress the state has made in protecting these resources, as well as the challenges and problems that have yet to be solved. The Subcommittees will be reviewing, amending, and approving the budgets of the state entities in charge of coastal protection and air quality, and information gathered in this hearing will be used to help evaluate budget needs for the coming year. The public will be invited to comment at the midpoint and at the end of the hearing. A final agenda and list of speakers will be available on request from Assembly Member Pavley's or Senator Kuehl's offices by Friday, February 25.

*The public is welcome and invited to comment after each section.*

## Mountain Lions Found Dead in Simi Hills

One of the most exciting things about living near open spaces is the proximity of wildlife that we rarely see, but know are there. Sadly, two collared mountain lions that were part of a study program, and known as P3 and P4, were found dead before Christmas in the Simi Hills. They died of internal bleeding from ingesting two poisons that are commonly found in household rat and mice bait. It is likely that rodents ate the poison, a coyote ate the poisoned rodents, and then P3 and P4 killed and ate the coyote. A classic case of poison working and killing its way up the food chain. This is particularly distressing because P3 and P4 were often seen together and had the potential of producing a new generation of mountain lion kittens.



Last spring, six bobcat kittens were found dead with the same poisons in their system. The bobcat kitten one-year survival rate in the Santa Monica Mountains has plummeted from 75-85% to 28%, so this is a serious issue.

The National Park Service is about to publish a technical paper regarding anticoagulant poisoning of carnivores in the Santa Monica Mountains and adjoining open space. It is currently being peer reviewed, and is co-authored by the NPS, UC Davis, and several veterinarians. The findings and implications of that paper should be very important, and I will be reviewing it to see if there is any legislation that might help.

## Santa Monica Landscape Water Efficiency Grants

Last month, the City of Santa Monica's Environmental Programs Division awarded nine grants totaling about \$80,000 to property owners for sustainable landscape projects. These will help cover costs to design and/or install water-conserving plants, water-efficient irrigation systems, permeable paving, and rainwater catchment systems. Santa Monica is to be highly commended on their many environmental initiatives. The landscape grant program is just one of 15 programs the city offers to save water and reduce ocean pollution.

One of the goals of this program is to begin converting portions of the landscaped area of the city to be more climate compatible, and also to help reduce citywide water use 20% by the year 2010. Research shows that converting to California-friendly plants and water-efficient irrigation systems can save up to 80% of water costs. Water-efficient gardens produce less yard waste, reduce the need for harmful chemicals, and provide habitat for beneficial birds and insects.

**Applications for the next round of grants to Santa Monica residents are due March 31, 2005.** Call (310) 458-8405 for more information.

## Bits and Pieces . . .

### Report smoking vehicles

Last month I provided the toll-free number for Los Angeles County drivers to use to report cars on the road that are polluting our air with dirty exhaust fumes. L.A. County residents can call **1-800-CUT-SMOG**, at the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

Ventura County, too, operates a smoking vehicle program and encourages their County residents to do the same. To report smog-belching cars and help protect Ventura County's air quality, call **1-800-559-SMOG**. My thanks to Michael Villegas, Executive Officer of the Ventura County APCD, who took the time to send me their toll-free reporting number.



### Topanga Canyon Blvd. Hours Extended

While repair work continues to rebuild a stretch of Topanga Canyon Boulevard that was seriously damaged in the January storms, the road is now being opened to two-way traffic to assist canyon commuters. Between Pacific Coast Highway and Grandview Drive, the road is open **between 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**, effective immediately. Flaggers are on site, but delays should still be expected. Completion of the project is estimated for some time in May.



# Assemblymember Pavley's Committee Assignments

Budget Committee  
Education Committee  
Transportation Committee  
Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee  
Chair, Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources

Legislative Advisory Committee – Wildlife Conservation Board  
Legislative Advisory Committee – California Coastal Conservancy  
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Board

## HOW TO REACH ME:

### District Office:

6355 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Suite 205  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Phones: (818) 596-4141 • (805) 644-4141 • (310) 395-3414  
Fax: (818) 596-4150

### Capitol Office:

State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0041  
Phone: (916) 319-2041  
Fax: (916) 319-2141

**E-mail: [assemblymember.pavley@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:assemblymember.pavley@assembly.ca.gov)**

Or visit my website at [www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov)

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